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STRAIN 4

THE STORY THUS FAR...

Shunichiro Kusaka's multi-billion dollar gamble has just paid off—a KUSAKA test drill in Borneo has blown out a gusher of oil, proving the possibility of a new Asian power bloc centered around its own petroleum supply. But it's just at this moment of triumph that Shunichiro's crooked partner and old Oxford chum, Chinese mafia lord Shimei Sai, has made a secret deal to buy up Shunichiro's own shares of KUSAKA to form a controlling stake. And now two ruthless men, yakuza Murota and crooked cop Angel, assigned to eliminate Shunichiro's daughter Shion and half-brother Shingo, have instead defected to the side of the hunted. While Murota prepares to whisk Shion and her guardian Kyoko out of the country, Angel introduces Shingo to his heavily-armed friends—bitter Amerasian children of the Vietnam War, just like him.

STRAIN

STORY BY BURONSON, ART BY RYOICHI IKEGAMI

PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL

vol. 4

STORY BY
BURONSON
ART BY
RYOICHI IKEGAMI

ENGLISH ADAPTATION BY
YUJI ONIKI

This volume contains the STRAIN installments from PULP Vol. 3, No. 12 through Vol. 4, No. 7 in their entirety.

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BANANA FISH VOL. 1
BANANA FISH VOL. 2
BANANA FISH VOL. 3
BANANA FISH VOL. 4

BAKUNE YOUNG VOL. 1

BLACK & WHITE VOL. 1
BLACK & WHITE VOL. 2
BLACK & WHITE VOL. 3

DANCE TILL TOMORROW VOL. 1
DANCE TILL TOMORROW VOL. 2
DANCE TILL TOMORROW VOL. 3

HEARTBROKEN ANGELS VOL. 1

STRAIN VOL. 1
STRAIN VOL. 2
STRAIN VOL. 3
STRAIN VOL. 4

VOYEUR
VOYEURS, INC. VOL. 1

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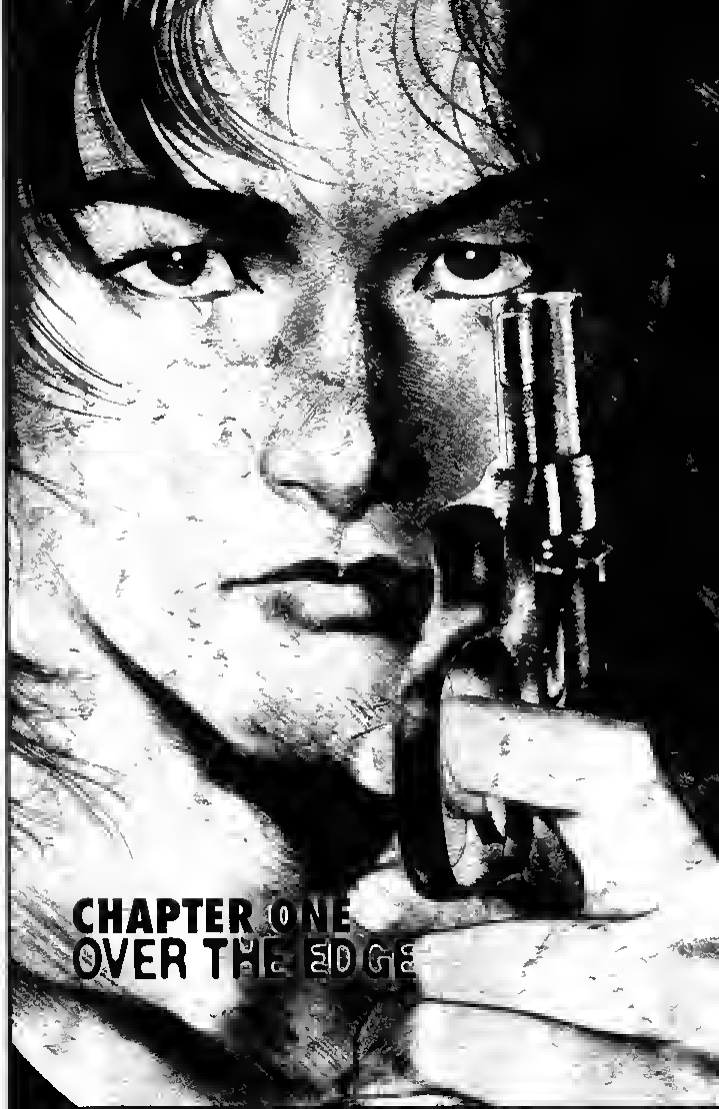
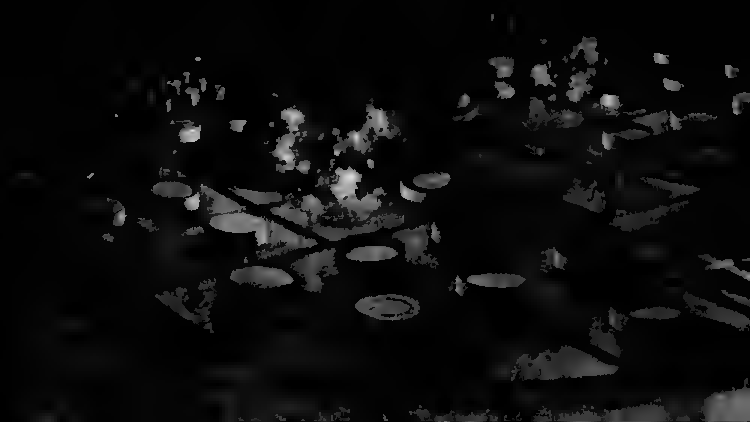

CHAPTER ONE
OVER THE EDGE

MID-EAST CONFLICT INTENSIFIES

FLAMES REDUCE KUSAKA'S DREAM TO ASH

Japanese Corporation Kusaka Suffers From Destruction of Its Oil Fields -- Will Kusaka Recover?



SHUNICHIRO...
DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY YEARS I PUT INTO THOSE OIL FIELDS... HOW MUCH OF KUSAKA WENT INTO THAT PROJECT?

ALL GONE NOW...
SK
K
R
G
H

THEY'RE THE ONES BEHIND THIS CONFLICT...
THEY'RE OUT TO RUIN KUSAKA
THE INTER-NATIONAL OIL CARTEL...
..THEY WON'T LET ANY JAPANESE CORPORATION GET "UPSTREAM" !!

I'VE REACHED THE END

KUSAKA'S FINISHED
zhoop
BLAM

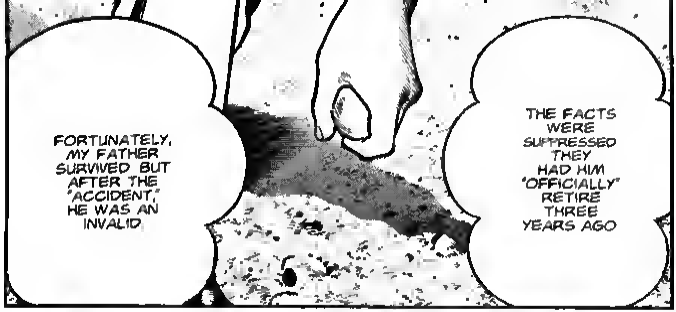
FATHER.. YOU ARE WEAK.

FSH
THAT MIGHT BE THE END OF YOU..
BUT MY KUSAKA IS STILL ALIVE AND KICKING!

S SIR, WHAT'S HAPPENED ?

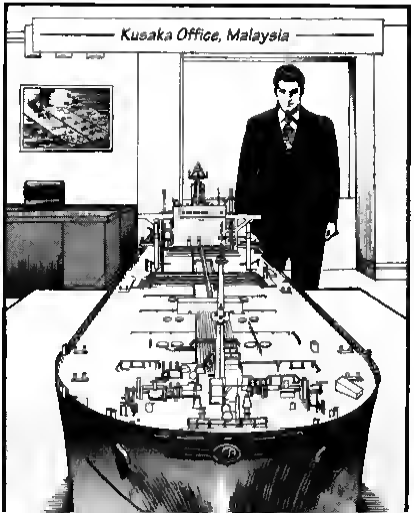
SHUNICHIRO

Phuket Island, Thailand


FORTUNATELY, MY FATHER SURVIVED BUT AFTER THE "ACCIDENT," HE WAS AN INVALID
THE FACTS WERE SUPPRESSED THEY HAD HIM "OFFICIALLY" RETIRE THREE YEARS AGO

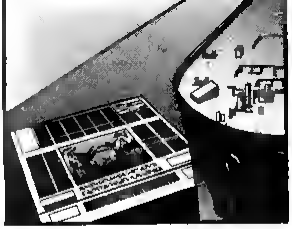
THAT'S WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

FROM THAT DAY ON, SHUNICHIRO WAS A DIFFERENT MAN...


Kusaka Office, Malaysia

THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER ?
YES, THEY'RE HIDING OUT SOME WHERE IN MALAYSIA
IF YOU DON'T FIND THEM THERE, THAT'S FINE
EMP
BUT IF YOU DO, THOUGH, AT LEAST GET RID OF THE MOTHER.
YOU AREN'T SATISFIED WITH GETTING SHINGO ON DEATH ROW?

MURAI...
YOU SAW HOW SHINGO WAS BEING SET UP. THE KUSAKA "STRAIN" IS DANGEROUS.
..AS LONG AS THERE'S A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY SOMEONE'S BOUND TO CLIMB THROUGH IT
BEST TO SEAL THEM ALL.
I ONLY BELIEVE IN MYSELF!
THAT IS THE PATH I'VE CHOSEN!!

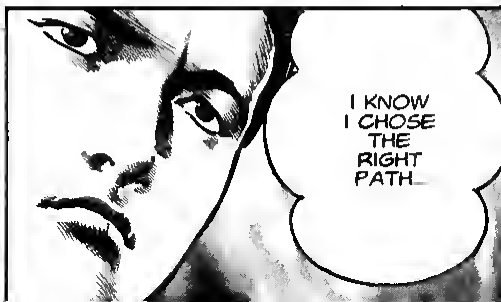


MONDAY

JAPANESE CORPORATION KUSAKA SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA

JOINT OIL ENTERPRISE TO BE LED BY KUSAKA

New Development in Asia -- The Birth of a Major Oil Company?



COME HERE, KYOKO

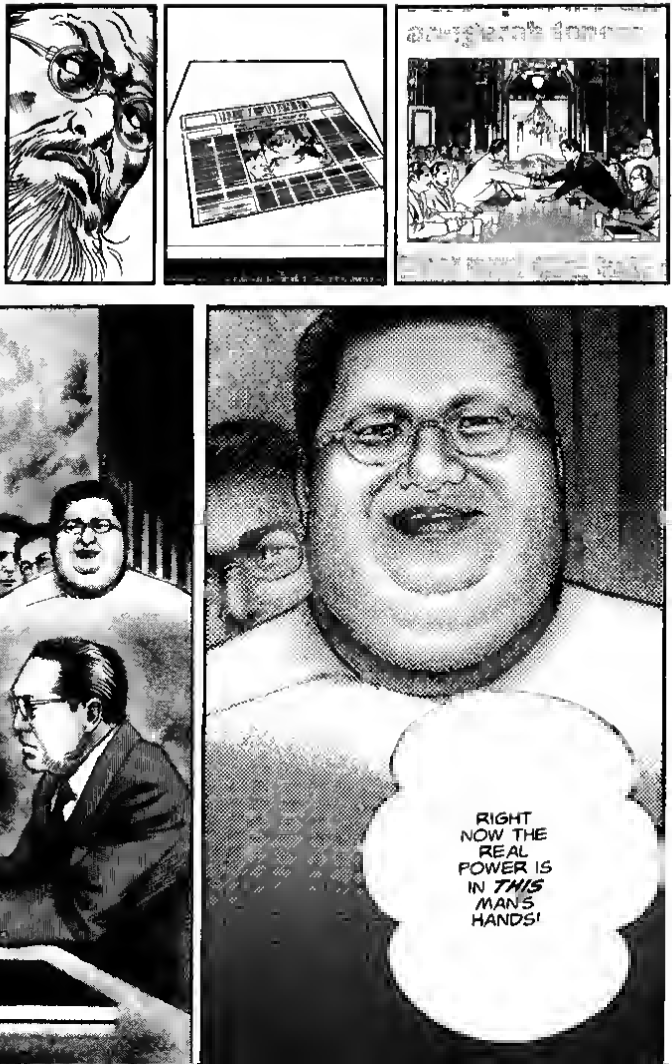
HOW DO I LOOK? IS IT A BIT MUCH?
YOU THINK MAYO WOULD LIKE IT?
YOU'RE GETTING SEXIER BY THE DAY... I'D SAY...
...YOUR TITS ARE GETTING BIGGER TOO.
TP TP
HEY!
WHADDYA SAY ABOUT THIS?
SHF

THEY'VE STRUCK OIL AND YOUR BROTHER'S AT THE CENTER OF IT ALL... KUSAKA'S STOCK IS SKYROCKETING.
YOU REALLY THINK YOU GOT A CHANCE AGAINST HIM?
...
MAYO!
FSH
AA
SHE'S BEING SHY!?
IF OUR KID WERE STILL ALIVE, SHE'D A' BEEN HER AGE.

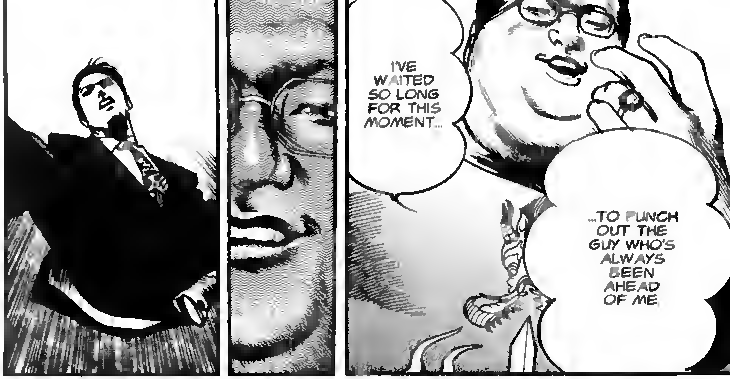
IF MY DAUGHTER WERE IN LOVE WITH YOU...
I'D NEVER LET YOU LEAVE HERE!
MUROTA...
S-SAI!?
MR. SAI...

SO YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
I THOUGHT SHIMEI SAI HAD YOU!
YOU'VE NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON!
W-WHAT!? SHUNICHIRO DOESN'T HAVE ANY POWER!?
THE STOCKS SHUNICHIRO GAVE AS COLLATERAL TO GET A LOAN FROM THE SYNDICATES WERE BOUGHT BY SHIMEI SAI
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS ONLY COLLATERAL, ONCE THEY PUBLICIZE HIS CLANDESTINE DISTRIBUTION OF STOCK TO CRIMINAL ORGANI ZATIONS..

..HE'LL BE FINISHED. HE'LL HAVE TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY AND RESIGN. IN OTHER WORDS, SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA IS UNDER SHIMEI SAI'S COMPLETE CONTROL!
...
B-BUT COULDN'T HE BUY BACK HIS COLLATERAL? THAT'S ALL HE WOULD HAVE TO DO...
NO FOOL IS GOING TO LET GO OF HIS WILD CARD...
...LET ALONE ONE THAT WOULD MAKE HIM A MAJOR ASIAN CORPORATION!
ALREADY, IN RETURN FOR THEIR COOPERATION WITH SHIMEI SAI, THE FUKUNAGA FACTION IS GAINING CONTROL OF KUSAKA IN JAPAN.
FROM NOW ON, SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA WILL ONLY BE A PAPER KING

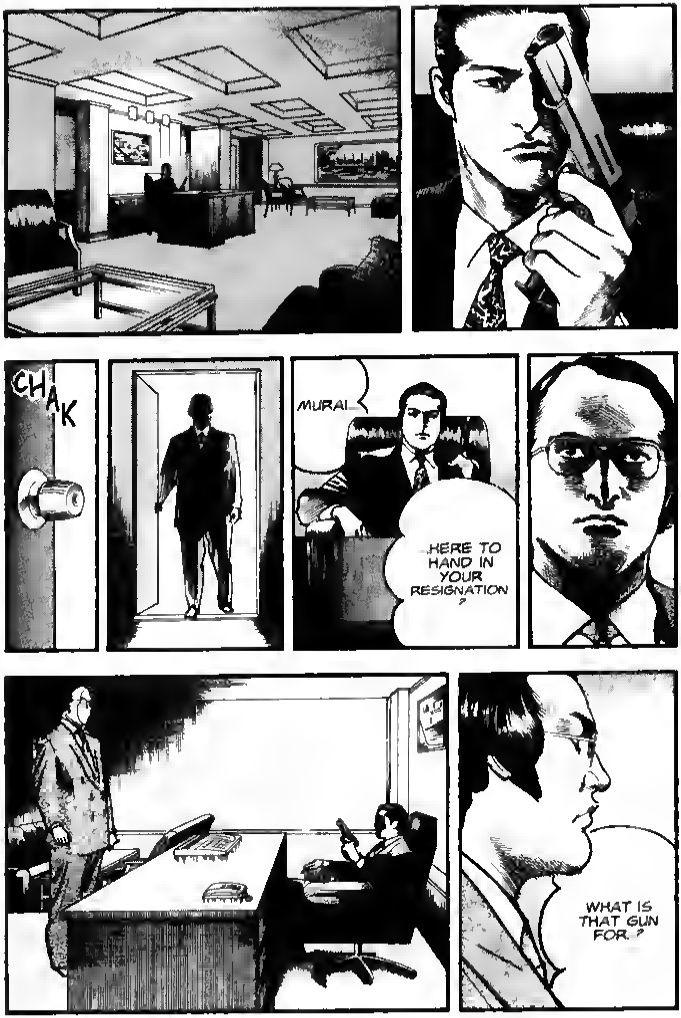

RIGHT NOW THE REAL POWER IS IN *THIS* MAN'S HANDS!

KRAK


I'VE WAITED SO LONG FOR THIS MOMENT...
...TO PUNCH OUT THE GUY WHO'S ALWAYS BEEN AHEAD OF ME

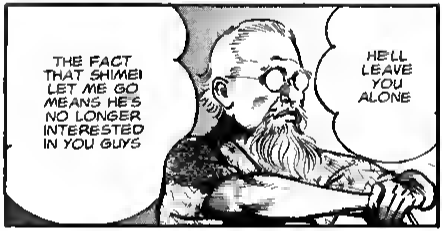
MR MURAI, MR AOKI...
PERHAPS IT IS TIME YOU CHOSE A NEW BOSS.

SHUNICHIRO, I'VE EVEN GOT A JOB FOR YOU - IF YOU DON'T MIND TAKING ORDERS


CHAK
MURAI...
...HERE TO HAND IN YOUR RESIGNATION?
WHAT IS THAT GUN FOR?

GUNS ARE FOR SHOOTING OTHERS
KACH
MURAI
I WILL GO KILL SHIMEI SAI!
IF I'D FOUND YOU HERE WITH A BOTTLE OR WITH A GUN TO YOUR HEAD
I WOULD HAVE JOINED UP WITH HIM

BUT MY BOSS WILL ALWAYS BE SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA!
MURAI...
FSH
DON'T BE R...SH! YOU DON'T HAVE TO SACRIFICE YOURSELF!


THE FACT THAT SHIMEI LET ME GO MEANS HE'S NO LONGER INTERESTED IN YOU GUYS
HE'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE

RIGHT ON!!
SMAK!

THIS IS GREAT!!
WE CAN FORGET ABOUT THAT "STRAIN" CRAP AND BEGIN OUR NEW LIVES. WE'RE SET!!

SO I GUESS KYOKO AND I SHOULD GET HITCHED OR SOMETHIN', HUH!?
MAYBE SHION AND SOMEONE ELSE TOO, EH!?
SHUT UP!
STOP IT!

FSH
MAYO...
H HEY, WHERE YOU GOIN?
I NEED TO BE ALONE.
UNBELIEV-ABLE, THAT SHUNICHIRO COULD LOSE...
KRICH

LINDA
ELLIOTT
I'D LIKE TO HIRE YOU FOR A KILLING.

IN THE BACK STREETS OF MALAYSIA, BLOOD RUNS THICK, BUT NOT THICKER THAN WATER....

PULP GRAPHIC NOVELS—REAL MANGA FOR UNREAL TIMES!

Shunichiro Kusaka plans to shape the future of the world. Using his intellect, charisma, and the family megacorporation, Kusaka speaks with pride of an Asian-dominated 21st century, based around control of oil reserves, in a vision that encompasses the "family" of "all Yellows"—from the rich, sedate Japan to the restless nations of Southeast Asia. Yet Shunichiro's *own* family, his own "strain," had to be eradicated first. It's first and foremost in his self-interest; when his father disappeared, Kusaka's bankers and elder directors attempted to back his half-brother Shingo for the succession, thinking he would be easier to manipulate. On a Malaysian trip, Shunichiro promptly framed Shingo for capital drug possession; believing him executed, he later moved to murder an old lover and her daughter who had ended up in the slums of Kuala Lumpur. But, through a quirk of fate, Shingo was not executed; instead he escaped and for three years worked as an assassin under the pseudonym Mayo, meaning "The Horse." Ham is the second reason for Shunichiro winnowing out his "strain;" he believes it is dangerous, and that Shingo is an aberrant bad seed who even in childhood stalked human game. Betrayer that he is, Shunichiro may be right about his half-brother, who has won over the men he sent to eliminate Shingo once and for all. And with Shunichiro finding himself betrayed by his erstwhile partners in crime, his schemes may all unravel. The question is: who will tie the skein of the "strain?"

Buronson is the acclaimed author of the political crime thriller **Sanctuary** *and the post-apocalyptic action-adventure saga* **Fist of the North Star.**

Ryoichi Ikegami is the world-renowned artist whose gritty, realistic, and erotic artwork graces the pages of **Sanctuary, Crying Freeman, Mai the Psychic Girl,** *and* **Samami Crusader.** *He was awarded a coveted Ink Pot Award at the 1995 San Diego Comic Con.*

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4
STRAIN
STORY BY BURONSON ART BY RYOICHI IKEGAMI
PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL

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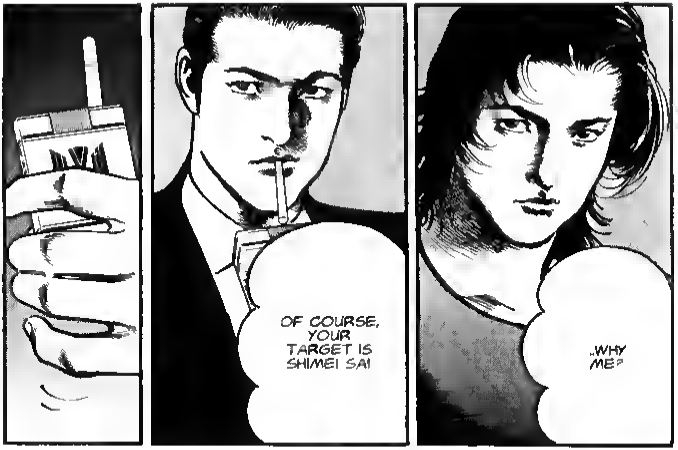
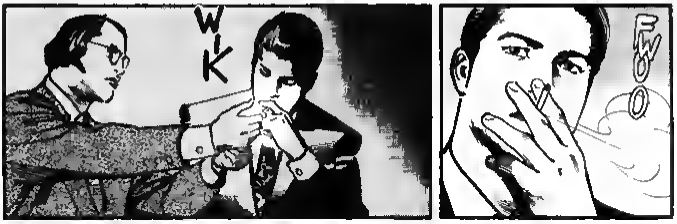
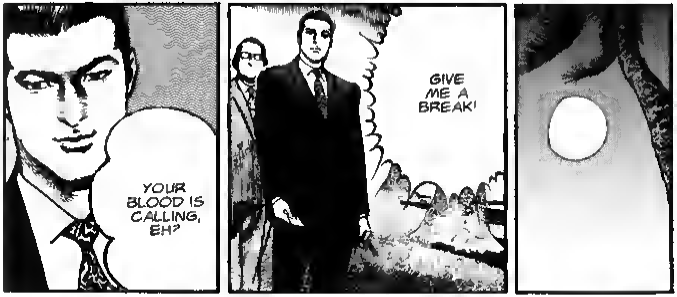
CHAPTER TWO
RETALIATION


OF COURSE, YOUR TARGET IS SHIMEI SAI
..WHY ME?


WK
FUO

THAT'S YOUR LINE OF WORK, IS IT NOT? YOUR SERVICE IS INEXPENSIVE
AND I DON'T KNOW OF ANY OTHER ASSASSIN WHO'D ACCEPT THIS CONTRACT

BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT, YOU'RE PART OF KUSAKA.
CHAK
YOU'LL BE HELPING KUSAKA


YOUR BLOOD IS CALLING, EH?
GIVE ME A BREAK!

SHION

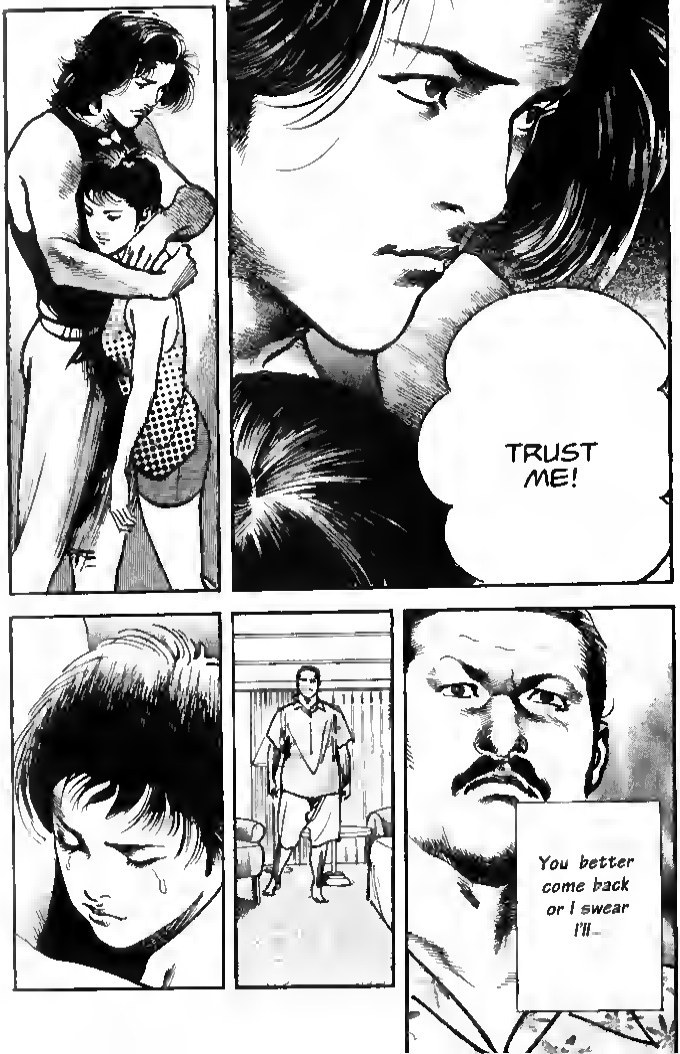
YOU BACK-STABBING BASTARD!
YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH ANYTHING! YOU'RE FILTH!!
YOU CAN WIPE YOUR ASS ON THAT MONEY!
KRASH
SHION...
ONLY A PUNK WIPES HIS OWN ASS.
I HAVE OTHERS WIPE MINE
PA
PA
PA

RRRSH!
SHF
STOP IT!
M MAYO.
EWK

BANK NEGARA
M-MAYO!

I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU
YOU'RE A BROTHER TO BE ADMIRED
MAYO..

THAT'S RIGHT. MY MOTHER'S FAMILY IS IN ASO. I WANT YOU TO TAKE SHION THERE
ONCE I TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS HERE, I'LL JOIN YOU GUYS. YOU'LL BE HELPING ME FROM OVER THERE
KYUSHU !?
CHAK
SHION...


TRUST ME!
You better come back or I swear I'll—

I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO AGREE SO EASILY

YOU THINK HE'S COMPLETELY SELFLESS... OR A FOOL?

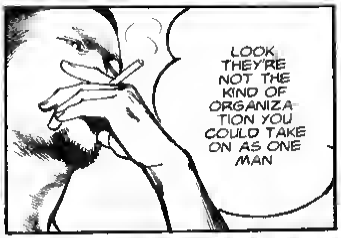
LET'S JUST HOPE HE'S AN IDIOT

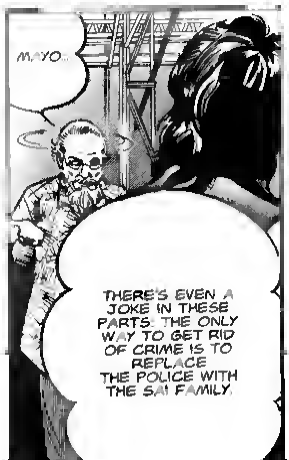
.I CAN'T TELL

YOU FUCKIN' IDIOT!

YOU GOT A DEATH WISH!?
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SHIMEI SAI, NOT YOUR NEIGHBOR-HOOD THUG!

DON'T YOU KNOW HOW POWERFUL THE SAI FAMILY IS?


LOOK, THEY'RE NOT THE KIND OF ORGANIZA-TION YOU COULD TAKE ON AS ONE MAN


MAYO...
THERE'S EVEN A JOKE IN THESE PARTS. THE ONLY WAY TO GET RID OF CRIME IS TO REPLACE THE POLICE WITH THE SAI FAMILY.

IF THEY COME AFTER YOU, THEN MAYBE YOU'D HAVE TO FIGHT BACK, BUT YOU DON'T *PICK* A FIGHT WITH THEM.
THIS IS COMING FROM ME, MAYO

YOU TWO, COME HERE
WH- WHAT THE—
YOU'RE CRAZY IF YOU...
NO, I'M SERIOUS
HOW ABOUT DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT WITH YOUR LIVES?

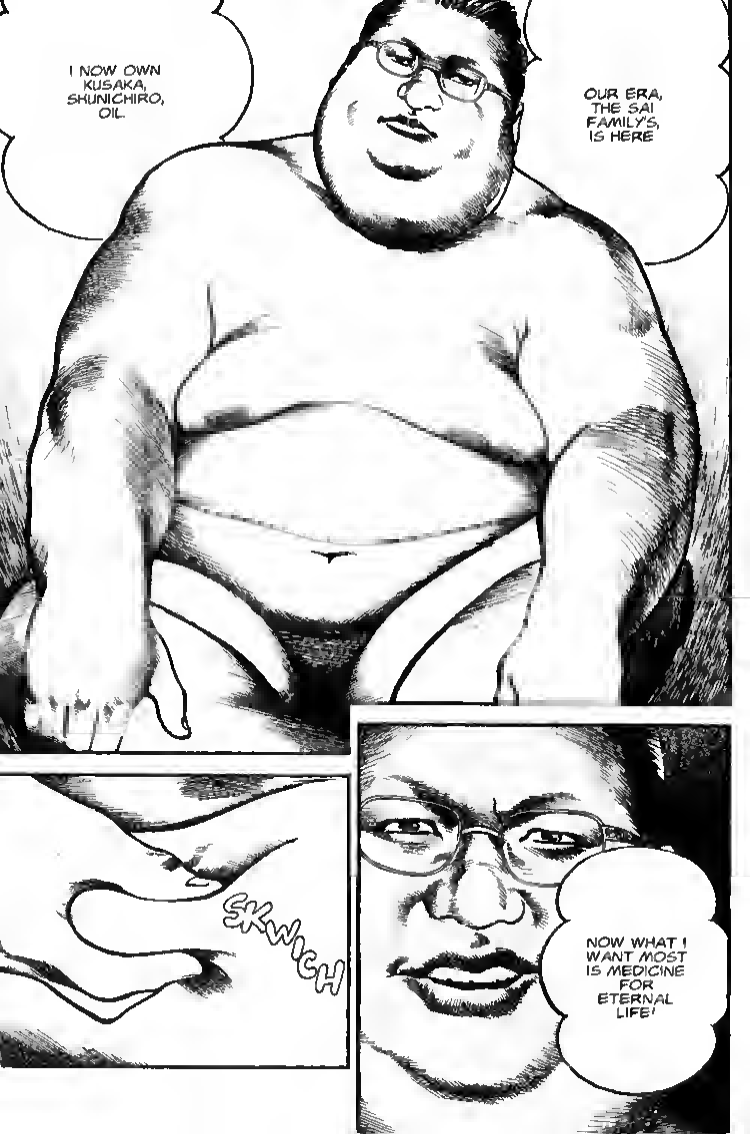
WHUD
MEE MEE
HA HA HA HA..
ANGEL
COME WITH ME, GUYS!!
WHMP
WE'RE IN FOR A WILD ADVENTURE !!

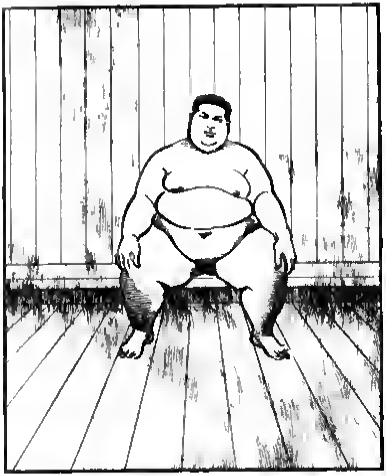
Aso, Kumamoto Prefecture-Kyushu, Japan
SKICH!

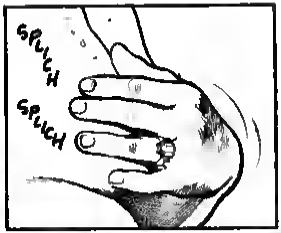
WHUD
TH-THIS IS...
YES SIR.. THE FAMILY OF THE LADY WHO MARRIED INTO KUSAKA. THAT'S RIGHT HERE, SIR
陣
"JIN.."
J-JIN!? JIN OF ASO..
YOU MEAN THAT JIN?

Malaysia
SPLISH
SPLISH
FSHHH

YOU WANT ME?
NOT TODAY
REI FAH.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT MOST IN THIS WORLD..?
FTUMP


I NOW OWN KUSAKA, SHUNICHIRO, OIL.
OUR ERA, THE SAI FAMILY'S, IS HERE
SKWICH
NOW WHAT I WANT MOST IS MEDICINE FOR ETERNAL LIFE!



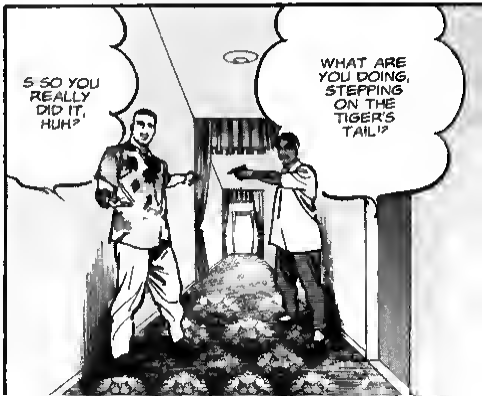

SPLUCH
SPLUCH

KREEK
HM!?

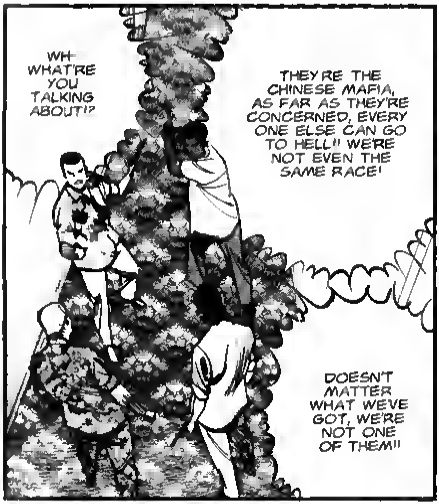
PHUT
PHUT
PHUT
PHUT
PHUT

陣
IF IT'S THAT JIN
SHINGO'S FROM AN INCREDIBLE FAMILY

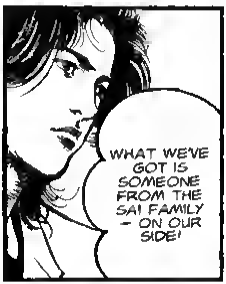
SOME DAY, HIS "STRAIN" WILL CATCH ON FIRE


S SO YOU REALLY DID IT, HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, STEPPING ON THE TIGER'S TAIL!?

WHAT THE HELL'S GOIN' ON!?
WE'RE TAKING OVER THE SAI FAMILY!!


WH-WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?
THEY'RE THE CHINESE MAFIA. AS FAR AS THEY'RE CONCERNED, EVERY ONE ELSE CAN GO TO HELL!! WE'RE NOT EVEN THE SAME RACE!
DOESN'T MATTER WHAT WE'VE GOT, WE'RE NOT ONE OF THEM!!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT


WHAT WE'VE GOT IS SOMEONE FROM THE SAI FAMILY — ON OUR SIDE!

SHIMEI SAI'S UNCLE!

AND ONCE WE RE-FORM THE FAMILY, THE FUTURE OF SHUNICHIRO AND KUSAKA WILL BE IN OUR HANDS!

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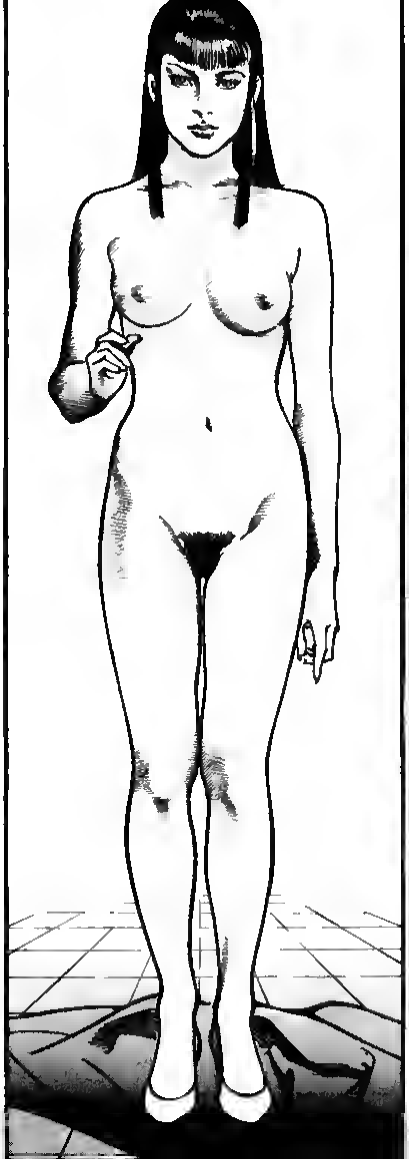
CHAPTER THREE
THE COMEBACK

LET'S GO! THERE'S NO TURNING BACK NOW
TMP
I WANT YOU TO ROUND UP THE LEADERS OF THE ORGANIZATION.
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.

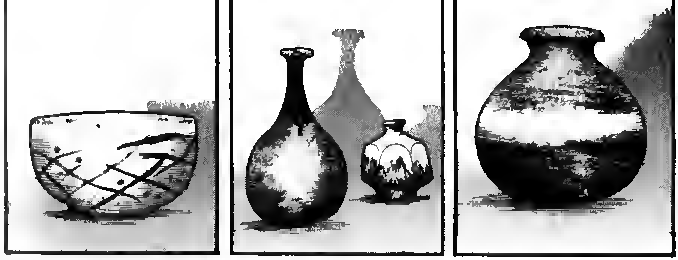
YOU THINK YOU CAN ACTUALLY WIN?
I WOULDN'T BE HERE IF I THOUGHT OTHER-WISE
I SEE
FUP
SHLP



WHO ARE YOU...?

陣
Jin
UH, WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHO IS THIS "JIN"?
KREEK
OH.
T-THIS LETTER IS FROM SHINGO KUSAKA.

SIR, YOU HAVE VISITORS

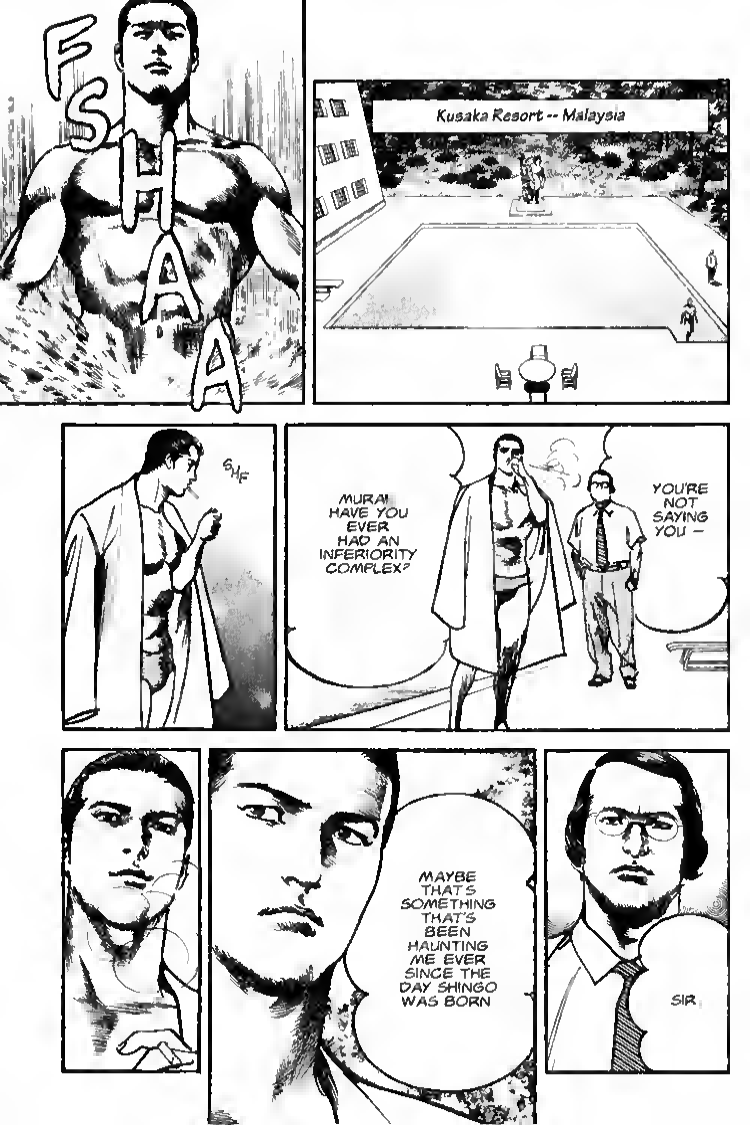


W-WOW..
蘇窯
Soyo

J-JUST AS I THOUGHT, SOYO JIN
SOYO?
SO THIS IS THE JIN...
..THE WORLD-FAMOUS CERAMICS ARTIST.

HE PUTS OUT SO LITTLE WORK, SOME THINK HE'S JUST A LEGEND
THERE'S COLLECTORS WHO'D SHANK EACH OTHER OVER THIS TINY PLATE.
S-SO THAT'S MAYO'S GRAND-FATHER...
BUT THAT'S ONLY ONE SIDE OF THE MAN.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
HE GOES BY ANOTHER NAME
HIS REAL NAME IS GENSUKE JIN. HE'S THE BIGGEST POWER BROKER IN JAPAN!!
WHAT?

ZHOOP

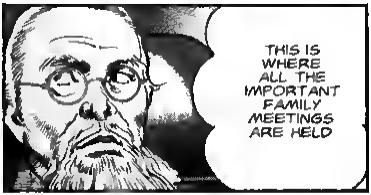

FSHAA
Kusaka Resort -- Malaysia
SHF
MURA! HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX?
YOU'RE NOT SAYING YOU —
MAYBE THAT'S SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN HAUNTING ME EVER SINCE THE DAY SHINGO WAS BORN
SIR

IF THERE'S ANYONE IN THIS WORLD WHO COULD SURPASS ME IT COULD ONLY BE...
...SHINGO KUSAKA!
BY SETTING HIM AGAINST SHIMEI SAI... I'LL KNOW HOW DANGEROUS HE IS IN TRUTH.

I CAN'T STAND FAT PEOPLE
FUCK ME

ZNNP
ONCE YOU HAVE MY BODY AT YOUR SIDE EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE ORGANIZATION WILL BE YOURS
TUGG
YOUR BODY? IT'S MEANING-LESS.
GET DRESSED!
IF IT'S A NEW BOSS YOU WANT, CHANGE THE WAY YOU LIVE
THUMP

SO THIS IS SHIMEI'S MANSION?


THIS IS WHERE ALL THE IMPORTANT FAMILY MEETINGS ARE HELD

VEEEN

WH-
WHAT
THE—
AQUARIA
ARE A
HOBBY
OF HIS
THIS IS WHERE
THE "EIGHT
DRAGONS". IN
OTHER WORDS,
THE EIGHT
LEADERS OF THE
ORGANIZATION,
MEET WITH
SHIME!
ALL
THE KEY
DECISIONS
ARE MADE
HERE
THE EIGHT
DRAGONS
WILL BE
HERE
SOON

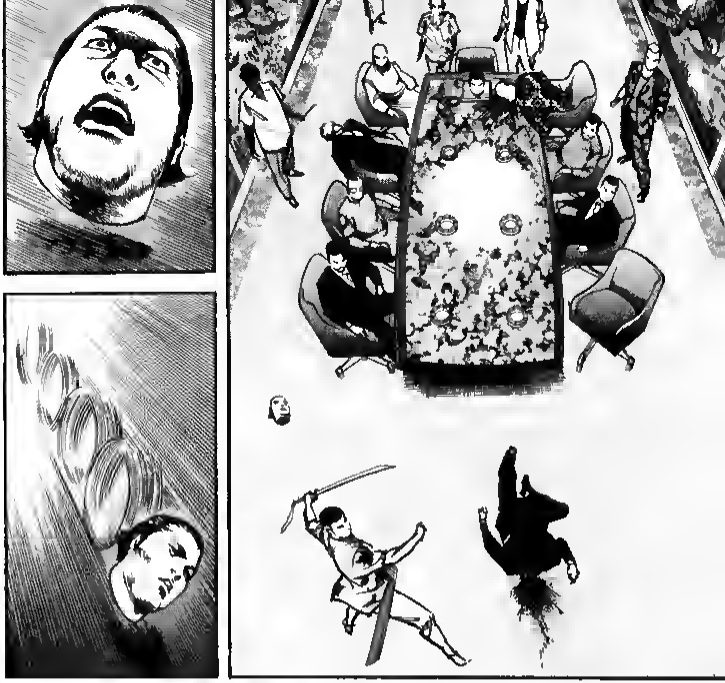
OLD SAI? WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE? WHERE'S THE BOSS?
THUMP
SHOOP

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE HEAD OF OUR FAMILY, SHIMEI SAI, HAS DIED
I'M HERE TO ANNOUNCE THAT I AM THE NEW FAMILY HEAD
HUH!?
hee hee
hee
YOU SENILE, OLD MAN? MAKING BAD JOKES LIKE—
PHUNT

UNCLE SAI! TRYING TO TAKE US OVER?

FWSH
KRAK
FSHA
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST—

THUMP
SHOOSH
THWACK



WHOEVER OPPOSES US...
...WILL SIMPLY BE REPLACED

LET ME REPEAT!
SHIMEI SAI IS DEAD — AND YOU'RE ALL FOOLS IF YOU CLING TO HIS CORPSE!

VIP
VEEEEEEN

ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ME?

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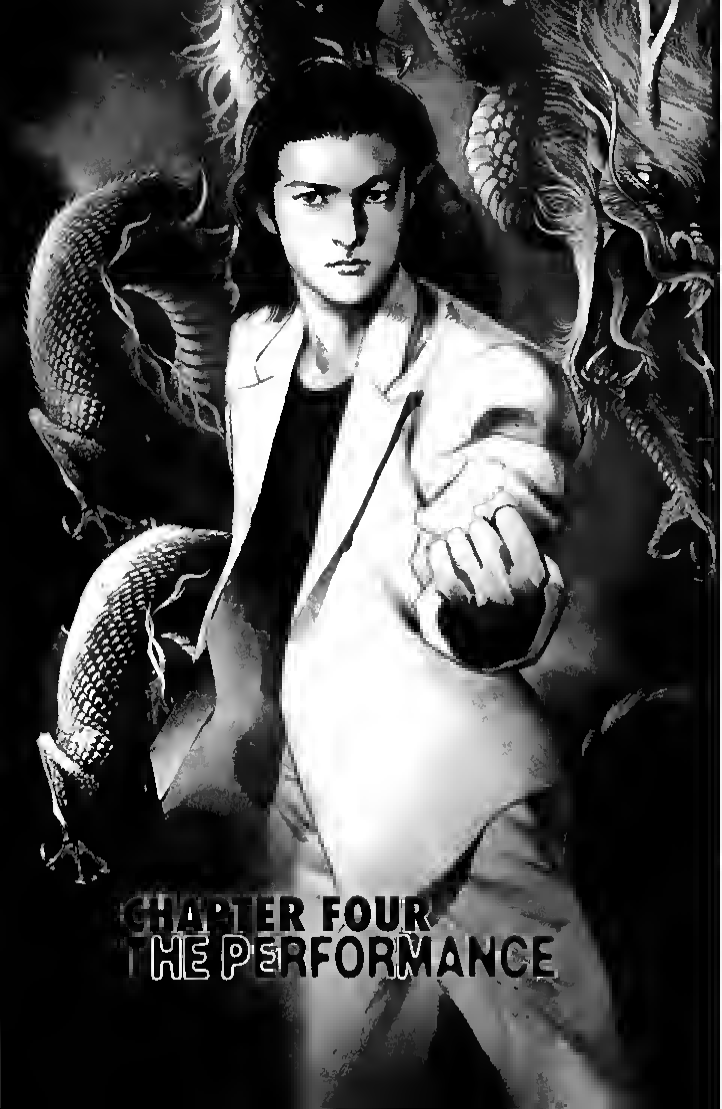


CHAPTER FOUR
THE PERFORMANCE

SAI!
OR HIS GHOST!
PHUNT
PHUNT
PHUNT

KRSH
KRRSH
KRSH

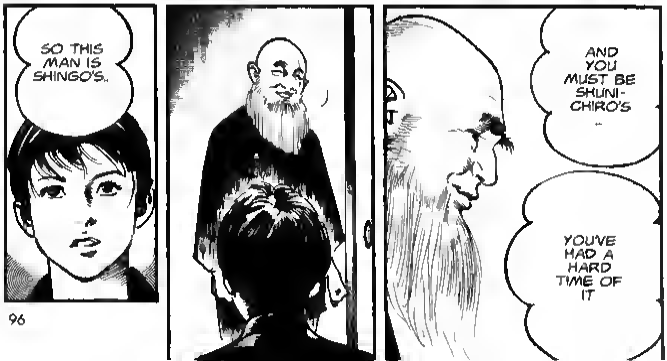
GOD-DAMN!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
TMP
UNLESS YOU WANT YOUR LEADER DEAD

VEEEN
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD OF HAVING A "DOUBLE"?
TMP-THP-TMPTHP

SO WE KILLED YOUR DOUBLE?
FWIK
TMP
I MIGHT BE ANOTHER FAKE
YOU CAN NEVER ASSUME WHEN YOU DEAL WITH THE SAI F.MILY... OR WITH SHIMEI SAI.

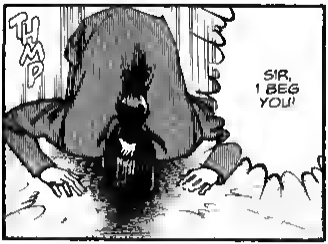
UNCLE
FWIK
YOU WON'T NEED YOUR GLASSES ANYMORE
THE FAMILY PUNISHES TREASON BY CUTTING OUT THE EYES, AND THEN THE EARS, THE NOSE, THE LIMBS...
YOU'LL BECOME A PART OF THAT TRADITION
SLOWLY, UNCLE, SLOWLY...
THMP

AS FOR YOUR PUNISHMENT ...I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING EQUALLY CRUEL.
GRRP


SO THIS MAN IS SHINGO'S..
AND YOU MUST BE SHUNI-CHIRO'S ..
YOU'VE HAD A HARD TIME OF IT

SIR!

I NEED TWO HUNDRED OF YOUR MEN! EVEN A HUNDRED!


THUMP
SIR, I BEG YOU!!

MY MEN!?

YES, SIR!

YOUR GRAND SON, HE'S IN A TIGHT SPOT!
I NEED TO HELP HIM! I HAVE TO!!

MUROTA
...
WHY DO YOU BELIEVE I HAVE THAT KIND OF POWER?
WELL, SIR
..IT'S BECAUSE THERE WAS ONE THING I NEVER UNDERSTOOD
SHINGO HOW COULD HE HAVE BROKE JAIL WHEN HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE EXECUTED?
NOW I KNOW!

YOU WERE BEHIND IT!
GENSUKE JIN COULD PULL THE STRINGS TO GET HIM OUT! EVEN FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY! EVEN FROM DEATH ROW!!
...
WOOSH
PLEASE, SIR!! I NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE TO HELP YOUR GRANDSON!!

YOU ARE PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF MY DOUBLE.
YOU UNDERSTAND?
YES, SIR.
SPREAD YOUR LEGS...

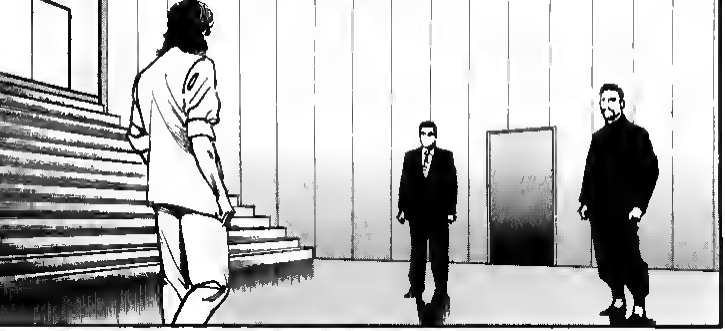
SHF

TUGG
FLUP

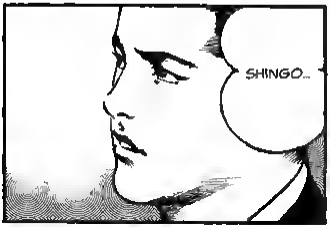
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN AGAIN, REI FAH
REMEMBER, WHAT MATTERS WITH A MAN ISN'T HIS BODY NOR HIS LOOKS.. IT'S HIS BRAIN
GRPP
I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING MINE'S COME UP WITH.

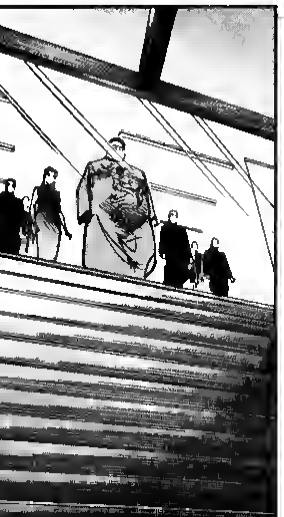
WHY AM I HERE?

VEEEEN



SHUNICHIRO..


SHINGO...



SHIMEI!

DON'T WORRY YOU'RE NOT HERE FOR SOME CORNY RECONCILIATION.

BUT I AM DOING THIS OUT OF THE KINDNESS OF MY HEART I DO WANT TO END THE CONFLICT BETWEEN YOU
TO BE HONEST, I NEED THE KUSAKA FAMILY.
THE MALAYSIAN OIL DEAL IS STILL IN ITS EARLY STAGES FOR THE PRESENT, I NEED A REPRESENTATIVE FROM KUSAKA.

TO BE MOST SPECIFIC, I NEED A KUSAKA PAWN
I'M NOT PARTICULAR WHICHEVER ONE OF YOU SURVIVES WILL DO
FOO
THIS SHOULD BE FUN, EH, REI FAH.

FWIK
SO... LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KILL YOU MYSELF, HUH?
DON'T BE SO SURE!
FWIK

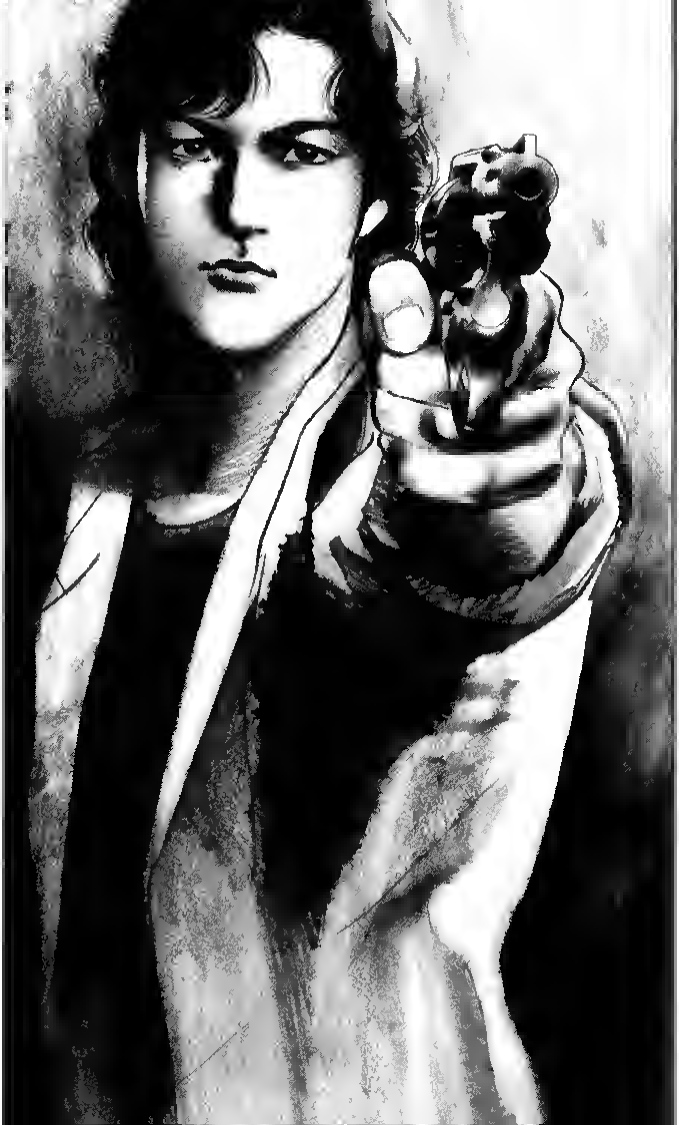
PLEASE, SIR!
BUT YOU'RE WRONG I'M SORRY IT WASN'T I WHO SAVED SHINGO
!?
B BUT WHO?
WHO ELSE WOULD HAVE THAT KIND OF POWER?
SOMEONE WITH THE POWER TO PUT HIM IN JAIL WOULD ALSO HAVE THE POWER TO HAVE HIM RELEASED..

SH-SHUNI-CHIRO
HIM?
MY FATHER !?
WHY !?
THOSE TWO MADE A PROMISE
THE UNITED ST
..TEARING A TEN-DOLLAR BILL IN TWO..
MAYBE THEY STILL BELIEVE IN THEIR PROMISE

SHINGO_

LET'S FORGET ABOUT THE TEN!

ALL RIGHT.



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CHAPTER FIVE
THE CHOICE

CHAPTER FIVE
THE CHOICE

THE UNITED STATES
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
10
10
12
12

WHICH ONE WILL GOD CHOOSE...
CHAK
CHAK
BROTHER...
A KILLER COULD NEVER HANDLE KUSAKA

GOOD BYE
SH-SHINGO!
DUG
KLIK

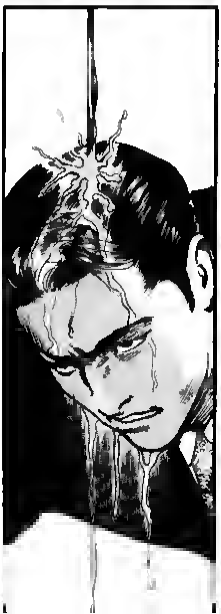
CHAK
KLIK
THEY'RE ALL EMPTIES.
BLAM
BLAM

MINE'S LOADED..
YOU ALREADY MADE UP YOUR MIND, DID YOU!?
THE SHOW IS OVER

GLIG GLIG
YOU THINK I CAN BE CONTROLLED MORE EASILY THAN SHINGO!?
OF COURSE!
HAVEN'T I ALREADY GOT YOU UNDER MY THUMB?
GHH!?

FWISH
SO SHINGO'S BETTER THAN ME!?
SMAK
!
TWST
I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOU
TWST
IT'S ALL OBVIOUS.
YOUR BROTHER ON THE OTHER HAND, HE, I CAN'T SEE THROUGH.

SO HE'S A THREAT!
UNCH!



I'M COUNTING ON YOU.. AS MY PUPPET, SHUNICHIRO

MEANWHILE, "THE THREAT" SHALL SOON DISAPPEAR

ANGEL
HA! NO APOLOGIES FROM YOU!
WE SAID WE'D COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE...

SA-WA!
LET'S FINISH 'EM OFF ! DON'T WANNA GET MALARIA OUT HERE

ALL RIGHT
CHA
K
I-N-G
AAAAAH!

ANGEL!

BRATTA

R-RE! FAH!
BRAT
R-RE! FAH.
URG!
GAH!

KRIGH
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
SOMEONE JUMPED US AND YOU ALL GOT AWAY...
FIP
THAT'S WHAT I'LL TELL HIM
BLAM
UNGH!

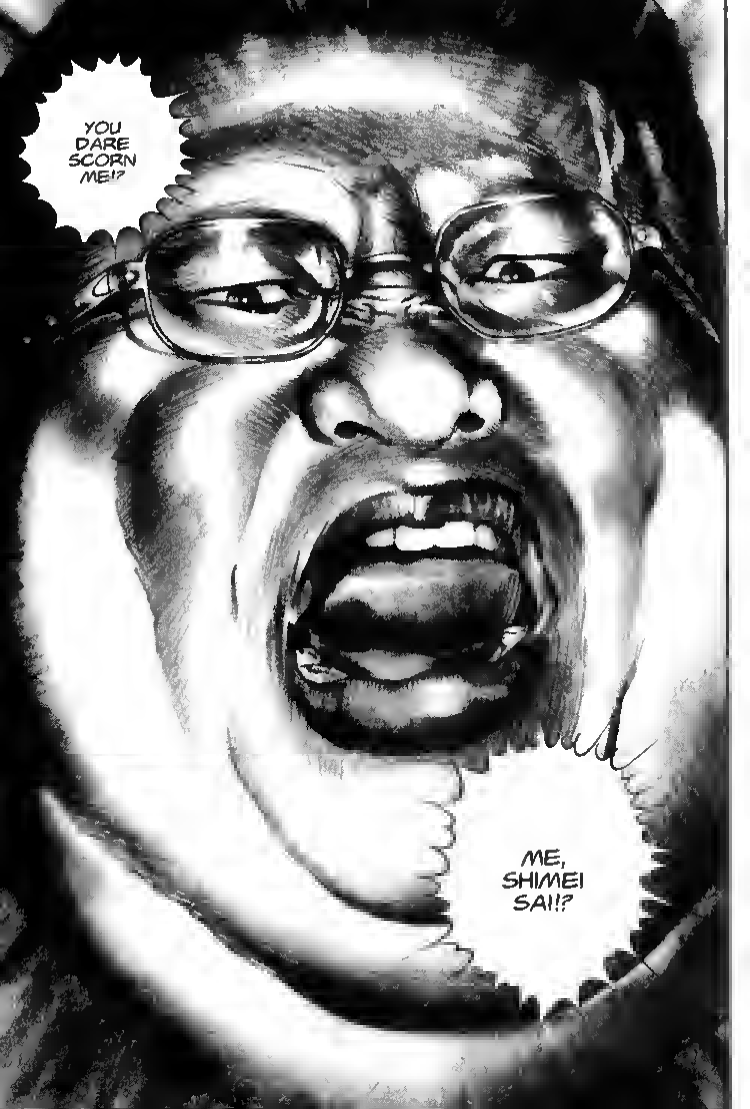
REI FAH!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
I TOLD YOU. I DON'T LIKE FATSOS.
THAT PIG'S AFRAID
YOU'RE A THREAT TO HIM
I'M PLACING MY OWN BET... ON YOU

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY?
REI FAH.
BECAUSE FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE I HAVE THE CHANCE TO CHOOSE
YOU'LL WIN. I PROMISE!
I'LL BE WAITING

CHUD
I HEARD HE ESCAPED
BLAM
YOU C'NT LIE TO ME

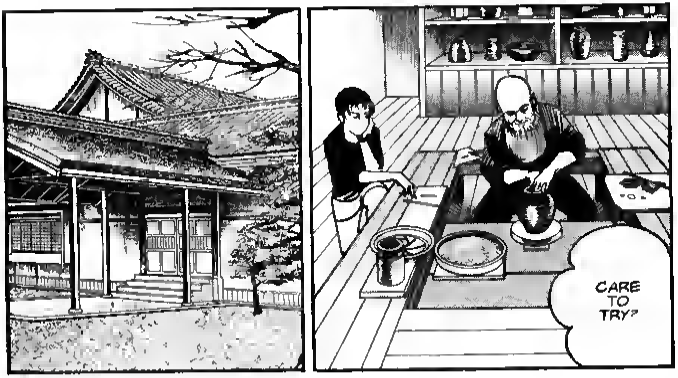
WHY!? WHY DID YOU BETRAY ME!?
I MADE YOU INTO A WOMAN
I TAUGHT YOU THE PLEASURE OF BEING A WOMAN!
I WAS THE ONE WHO SAVED YOU FROM THE GHETTO!

IF YOU'D OBEYED, YOU COULD HAVE HAD EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD! WHY!?
!
THE DIRTY FAT PIG..
I'M HAPPY.. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I ESCAPED FROM YOU.
W- WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
REI FAH!!
REI..


YOU DARE SCORN ME!?
ME, SHIMEI SAI!?

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF

I HEARD SHINGO ESCAPED
YES
TIME TO WAGE A NEW WAR


CARE TO TRY?

THUMP

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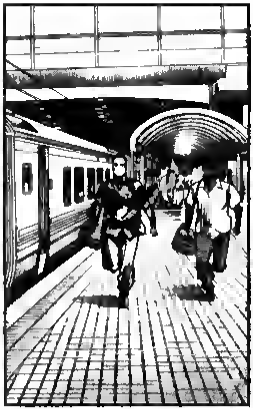
CHAPTER SIX
THE DECISION

D-DAD?
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE HERE
TMP TMP
SH-SHUNICHIRO!! WHERE'S SHION!?
FWP
SHUNI-CHIRO!! DON'T!

KCHAK
FP
MUROTA YOUR INSTINCTS WERE RIGHT
YOU KNEW WHICH ONE TO FOLLOW
IT'S YOUR MOTHER'S RING

MY.. MOM'S..
WHO'D
SIR!
I COME AS THE HEAD OF KUSAKA TO SEEK YOUR ASSISTANCE!

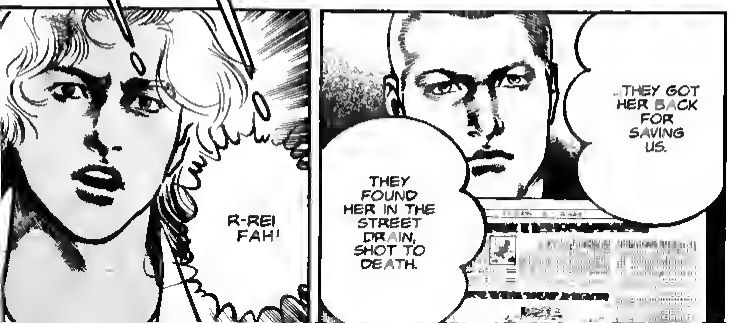
Kuala Lumpur Station, Malaysia
KUALA LUMPUR
KTM



MAYO. EVERYTHING WAS STILL THERE - THE MONEY AND THE WEAPONS!
THWOK
NOW WE'RE ALL SET!

FWIP
FWIP
MAYO!

前抵鬱也無損新娘子的美貌


R-REI FAH!
THEY FOUND HER IN THE STREET DRAIN, SHOT TO DEATH.
..THEY GOT HER BACK FOR SAVING US.

FWIP
KRN
NCH
WAP

WE'RE PARTING WAYS NOW
VIPP
WHAT!?
YOU GUYS TAKE THE TRAIN AS SCHEDULED
WITH THIS MONEY YOU CAN GO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD
WHAT ABOUT YOU?

FP
MAYO..
Y-YOU'RE NOT GONNA GO ALONE, ARE YOU?
FWIP
FORGET ABOUT IT. THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE MY OWN FIGHT..
I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO DIE FOR MY SAKE!

FMP

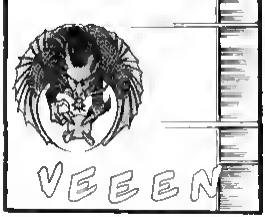
THNK

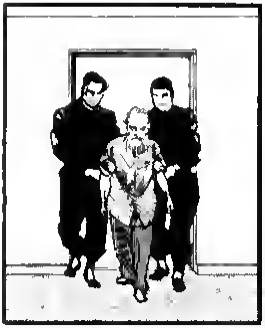
UNGH!

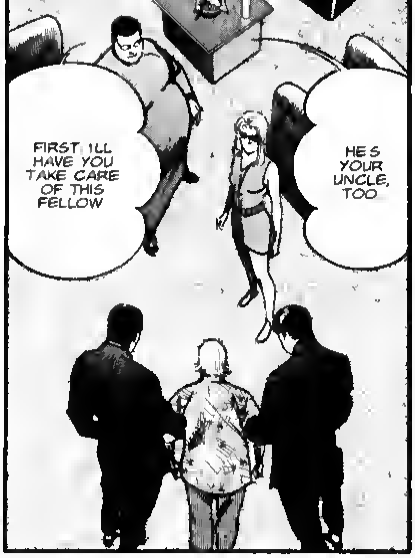
FASH
FASH
FASH
FASH

OK!
HOO..
PHONE FOR YOU!
I FIGURED YOU'D BE CALLING
FUI CHU
SCHOOL

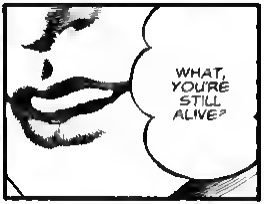
YOU'RE STILL IN THAT LINE OF WORK?
YOU'LL NEVER KNOW... THE PLEASURE ONE GETS FROM BEING WATCHED
IN ANY CASE
I'VE GOT SOME REAL WORK FOR YOU
VERY WELL...

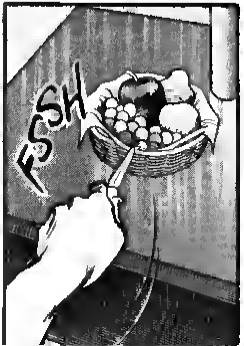

VEEN




FIRST I'LL HAVE YOU TAKE CARE OF THIS FELLOW
HE'S YOUR UNCLE, TOO

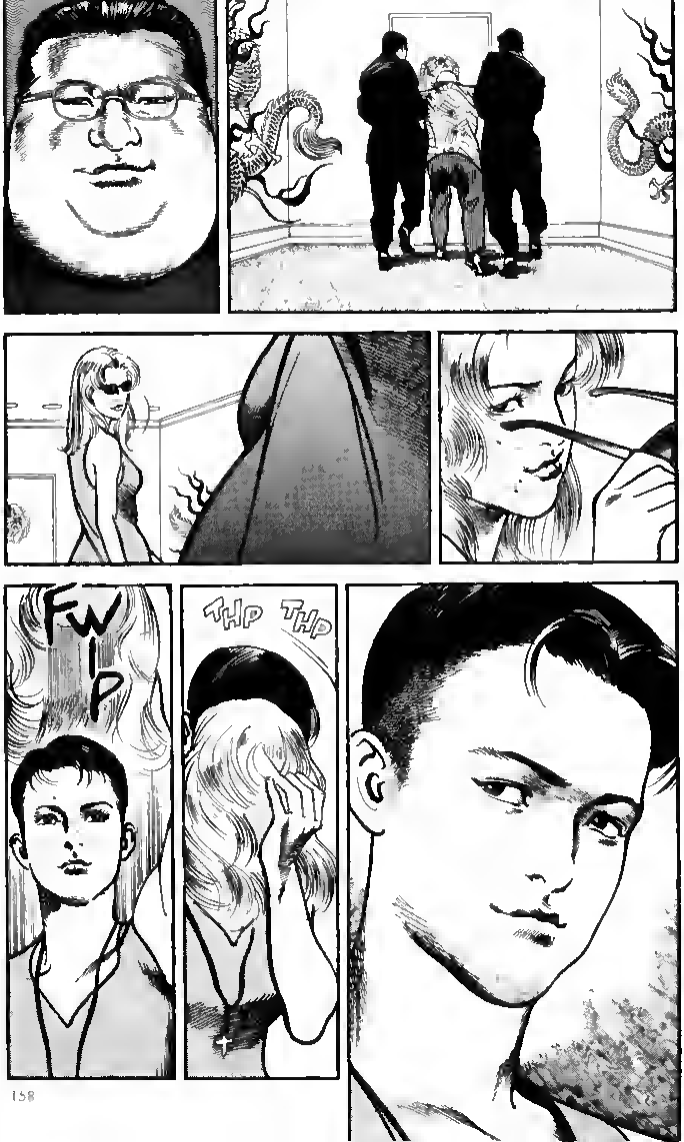
ANDRE


WHAT, YOU'RE STILL ALIVE?


FSH

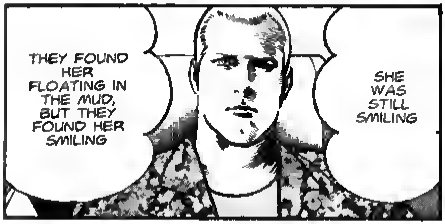
I HEARD YOU BETRAYED THE FAMILY
SLISH
PHHGH
SNIK
YOU WERE VERY GOOD TO ME WHEN I WAS A KID
YOU TAUGHT ME SO MUCH

KHKK
THRPP
FARE WELL, THEN..


FWIP
THP THP

NOW, THEN — I SUPPOSE I'LL GET TO WORK FOR MY COUSIN.. AND THE FAMILY

KLAKETTA
KLAKETTA
UR
WHY'D YOU...
CAN'T HAVE YOU DIE JUST YET.
WHUD
KLAKETTA
KLAKETTA
KLAKETTA


THEY FOUND HER FLOATING IN THE MUD, BUT THEY FOUND HER SMILING
SHE WAS STILL SMILING

I TOLD YOU ABOUT US THREE

WE NEVER KNEW OUR FATHERS.
OUR MOTHERS WERE RAPED THAT'S HOW WE WERE BORN

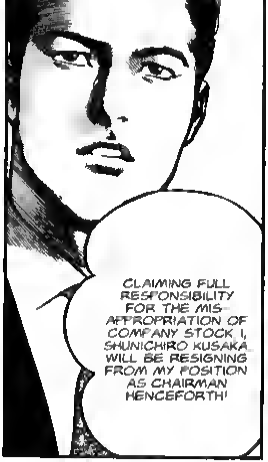
Ever since I can remember, getting kicked around was a daily routine.

THE ONLY THING WE LEARNED WAS HOW TO HATE
THAT WOMAN, REI FAH. SHE WAS ONE OF US
WE DON'T UNDER-STAND FEELINGS LIKE THAT...
WE DON'T CRY. WE DON'T LAUGH...
...
THAT MUCH WE WANT
JUST ONCE WE'D LIKE TO LAUGH.. FOR REAL...

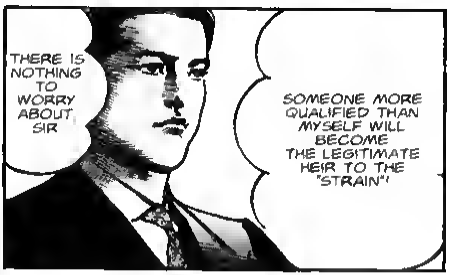
AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALIVE
WE'VE GOT THE CHANCE TO LAUGH BEFORE WE DIE
TUG
JUST LIKE REI FAH DID

WHAT!? YOU WANT TO RESIGN!?

YES, SIR!


CLAIMING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MIS-APPROPRIATION OF COMPANY STOCK I, SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA, WILL BE RESIGNING FROM MY POSITION AS CHAIRMAN HENCEFORTH!

WHAT'S TO BECOME OF KUSAKA?


THERE IS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, SIR
SOMEONE MORE QUALIFIED THAN MYSELF WILL BECOME THE LEGITIMATE HEIR TO THE "STRAIN"!

FMP
FMP

I HAVE COME TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE NEW HEAD OF THE CORPORATION SHALL BE SHINGO KUSAKA!
I ASK YOU, GENSUKE JIN, TO SUPPORT HIS APPOINTMENT!
SHUNICHIRO.

STRAIN
Jinchiseans
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CHAPTER SEVEN
OUT TO SEA

WHAT !?
SHUNICHIRO HAS RESIGNED!?

CHAPTER SEVEN
OUT TO SEA

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?
I STILL HAVE SOME BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF IN MALAYSIA
...I HAVE TO GET SHINGO BACK TO JAPAN IN ONE PIECE
HE'S THE MAN YOU FELL IN LOVE WITH. I WON'T LET HIM DIE
DAD

Malaysia
ANGEL MIND IF WE MAKE A STOP HERE?
HUH!?
THAT'S RIGHT IT'S RIGHT AROUND HERE, HUH?
SURE

GWEN...

...SHE'S INSIDE

GWEN

YOU'RE... SICK?
GWEN'S MOTHER
...
LET'S GO
ALL RIGHT.
GWEN TAKE YOUR TIME
WE'LL BE IN MALACCA
ANGEL...

Malacca

WHAT ABOUT YOU GUYS?
MINE'S IN SINGAPORE... SO IS PETE'S

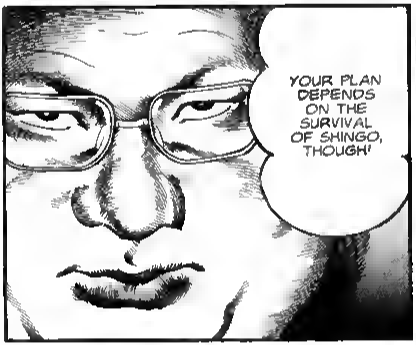
FROM VIETNAM TO THAILAND, THEN MALAYSIA. ALWAYS ON THE RUN. CHASED OUT...
WE ENDED UP AS FAR AS WE COULD GO...

ARE YOU IN TOUCH?
SURE
CHUF!
IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME
HER SAYING HOW SORRY SHE IS.
mnch mnch
THAT'S ALL SHE SAYS
SAME HERE
STILL APOLOGIZES FOR MY EXISTENCE
BUT THEY'RE THE ONES WHO HAD IT EVEN HARDER
...

FUJIFI

PETE GO GET SOMETHING TO EAT WITH ANGEL
I'LL JOIN YOU AFTER I PICK UP SOME THINGS AT THE STORE...

SHUNICHIRO!!
KRAK
THAT FOOL!!


YOUR PLAN DEPENDS ON THE SURVIVAL OF SHINGO, THOUGH!

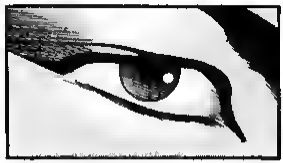
AND SHINGO CAN'T ESCAPE FROM ME!

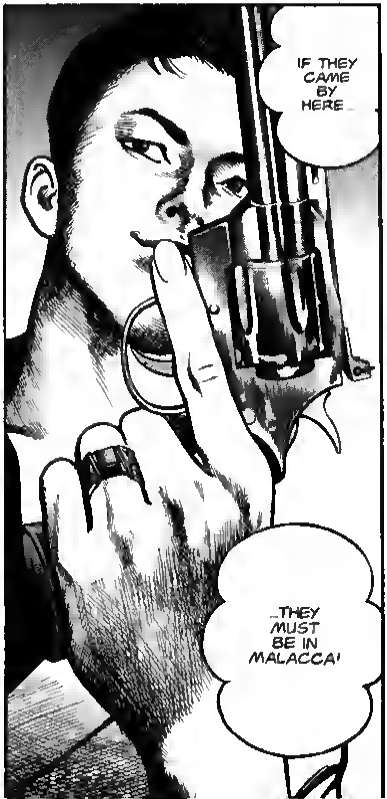
THIS IS MY TERRITORY! THERE'S NO WAY OUT FOR HIM!!

GWEN... YOU'VE CHANGED
I AIN'T THE ONLY ONE... ANGEL... PETE TOO...
WHUNK
FWAP
WHO THE—

KR
R
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

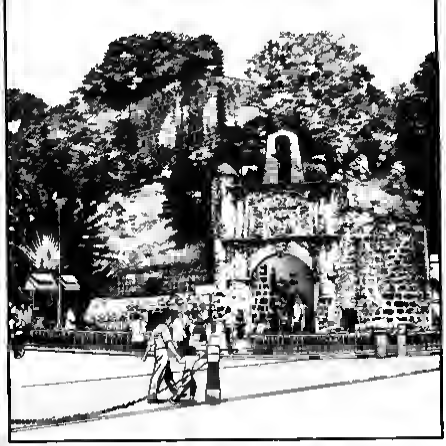
HE ENDS WHERE HE BEGAN... THERE'S POETRY HERE




IF THEY CAME BY HERE...
...THEY MUST BE IN MALACCA!

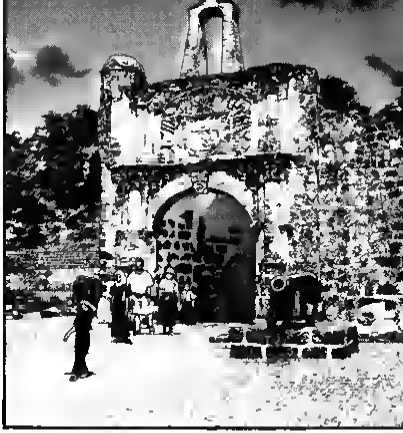
MUH
!?
WH
WHERE
THE HELL
ARE WE?

OUT TO SEA..?
HEY! WHERE'S OUR FARTHER!?
HE ASKED ME TO TAKE YOU TO SINGAPORE..
YOU TWO WERE FAST ASLEEP BY THEN
S-SO HE DRUGGED US WHEN WE ATE
THAT'S WHAT HE HAD TO GET AT THE STORE
BUT WHAT..
H-HE'S GOING TO TAKE THE ENTIRE SAI FAMILY ON ALONE!!



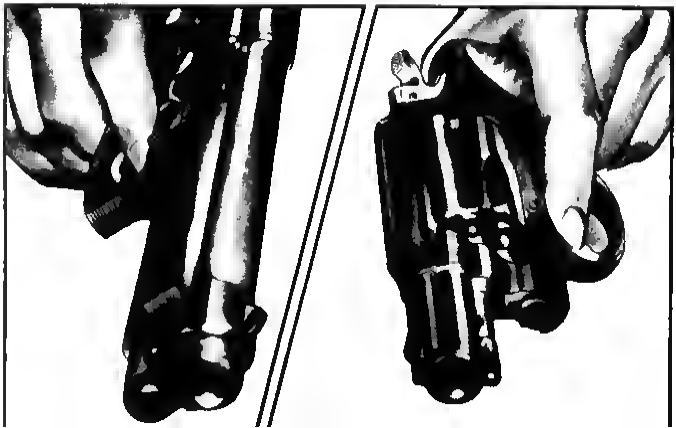
Japan
MUROTA
YOU AIN'T GOING NOWHERE WITHOUT ME, SHUNICHIRO.
HERE'S ONE FOOL YOU CAN ALWAYS USE

SHINGO'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, RIGHT?
THERE IS ONE THING THAT CONCERNS ME
WHAT IS?
IT'S ABOUT SHINGO'S TEMPERAMENT...



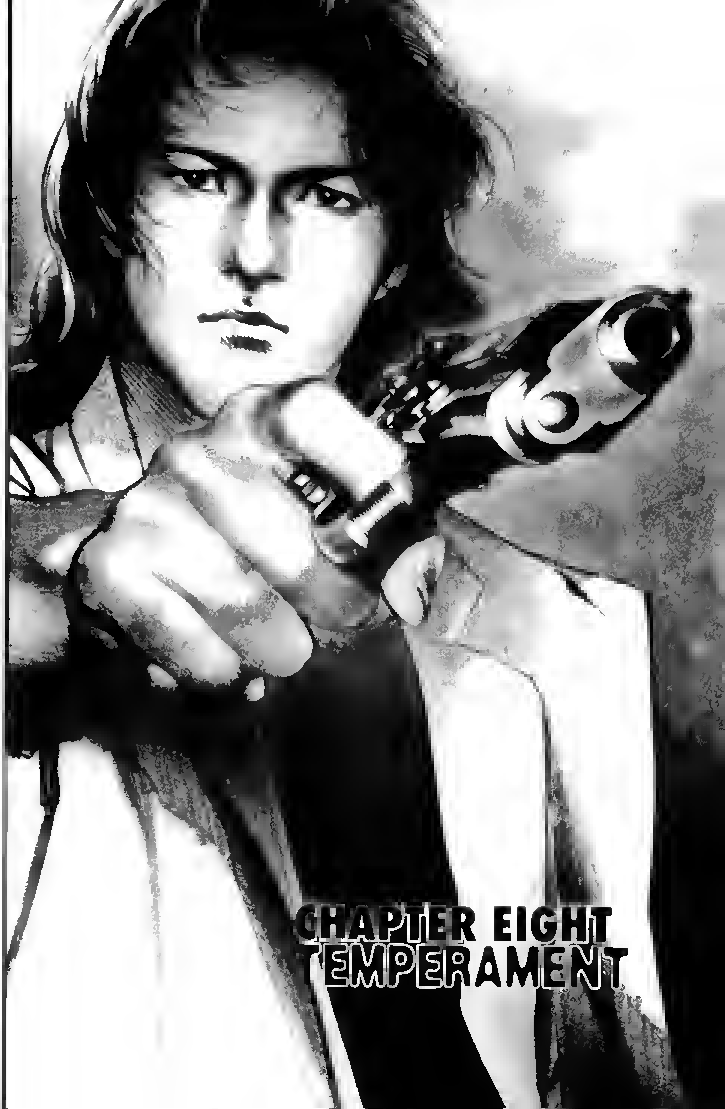
KREEECH
WHUD
WHUD

HMP



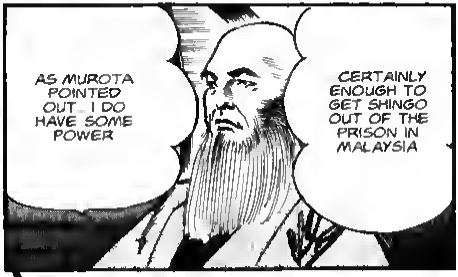
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

STRAIN
Jinchiseans
#Manga-Sketchbook@Dalnet



CHAPTER EIGHT
TEMPERAMENT

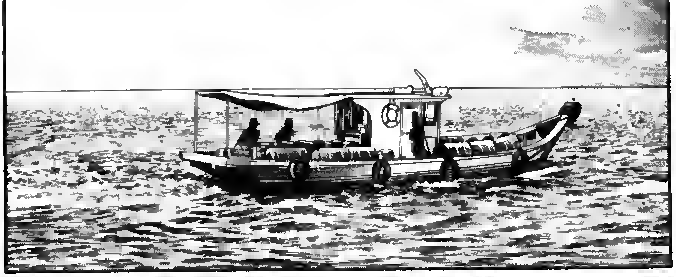
SHINGO'S "TEMPERAMENT"?


AS MUROTA POINTED OUT... I DO HAVE SOME POWER
CERTAINLY ENOUGH TO GET SHINGO OUT OF THE PRISON IN MALAYSIA

SHINGO KNEW THAT, BUT HE DIDN'T SEEK HELP

TH-THAT CAN'T BE...

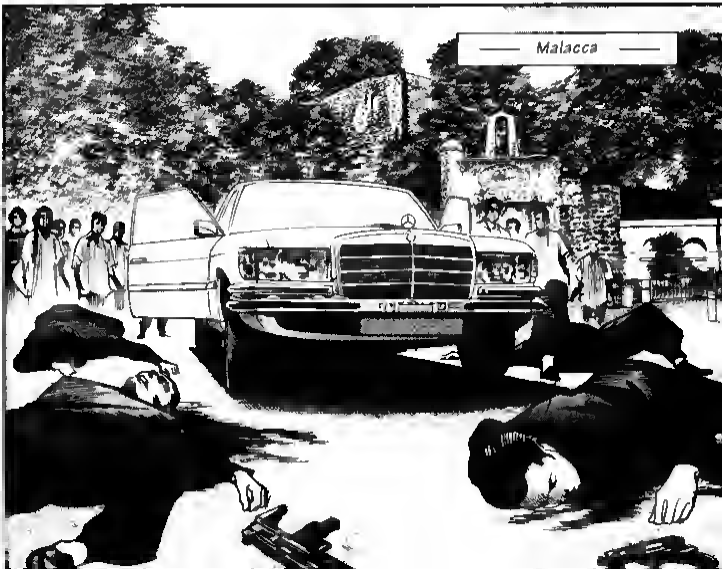
HE FIGURED IF HIS BROTHER WANTED HIM DEAD HE SHOULD DIE
THAT'S WHAT HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT
THAT'S SHINGO
THAT'S BOTH HIS STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS



HEARING ABOUT OUR MOTHERS.
THAT B.ASTARD...
FWISH

HEY! WE'RE GOING BACK TO MALACCA.
B-BUT
BLAM
WE DIDN'T ASK YOUR OPINION!

YOU THINK WE COULD LIVE ON WITH THE THOUGHT OF LETTING YOU DIE!?
KRNCH


Malacca

THEY WERE SENT AHEAD OF US

THOK
"SWEETIE" ANDRE, HUH...
I KNEW HE'D SHOW UP
KCH

Kuala Lumpur Airport

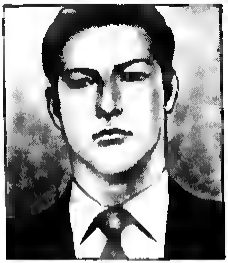
SIR
WE JUST RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM MR MURAI, WHO STAYED IN JAPAN

WITH MR JIN AS OUR BACKER, EVERYTHING IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY
FUKUNAGA'S GROUP HAS STOPPED ITS ACTIVITY

AND THIS SIR
FWD

KUSAKA CHAIRMAN STEPS DOWN

SURPRISE RESIGNATION IN FAVOR OF YOUNGER BROTHER, SHINGO



Young New Chair Of Family Corporation To Take Control As The Malaysian Oil Deal Hangs In Balance

AS INSTRUCTED, WE DISPATCHED PRESS RELEASES TO THE NEWS PAPERS, TV, AND RADIO NETWORKS

SOME OF THE HEADLINES HAVE ALREADY HIT THE NEWS STANDS.

LOOK, MUROTA IT REPORTS MY RESIGNA TION

IF SHINGO'S IN MALAYSIA HE'LL SEE THIS

HE'LL THINK TWICE ABOUT RISKING HIS LIFE

I JUST HOPE HE DOES...

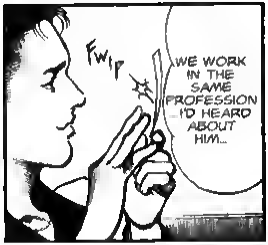
RKPPP
GET OUT!! THE TWO OF YOU PUT TOGETHER DON'T EVEN COME CLOSE TO REI FAH!!
KLUG

THOSE STOCKS SHUNICHIRO DISTRIBUTED ARE MEANING LESS WITHOUT SHUNICHIRO AS CHAIRMAN!!
WITH HIM OUT, THEY'RE NOTHING BUT COLLATERAL.
MERE MONEY WITHOUT CONTROL !!

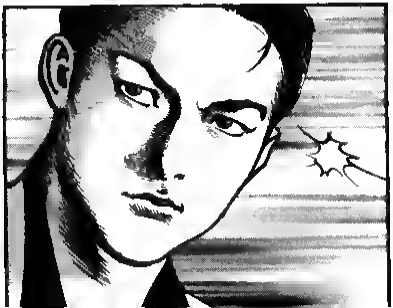
VEEN
SIR WE'VE RECEIVED A MESSAGE
ANDRE PLANS ON KILLING OUR TARGET

TELL HIM, IF HE FAILS, HE CAN FORGET ABOUT HIS PRETTY FACE!!
KRASH

MAYO... THE FIVE-DOLLAR ASSASSIN, HUH...
YOU KNOW HIM?


FWIP
WE WORK IN THE SAME PROFESSION I'D HEARD ABOUT HIM...

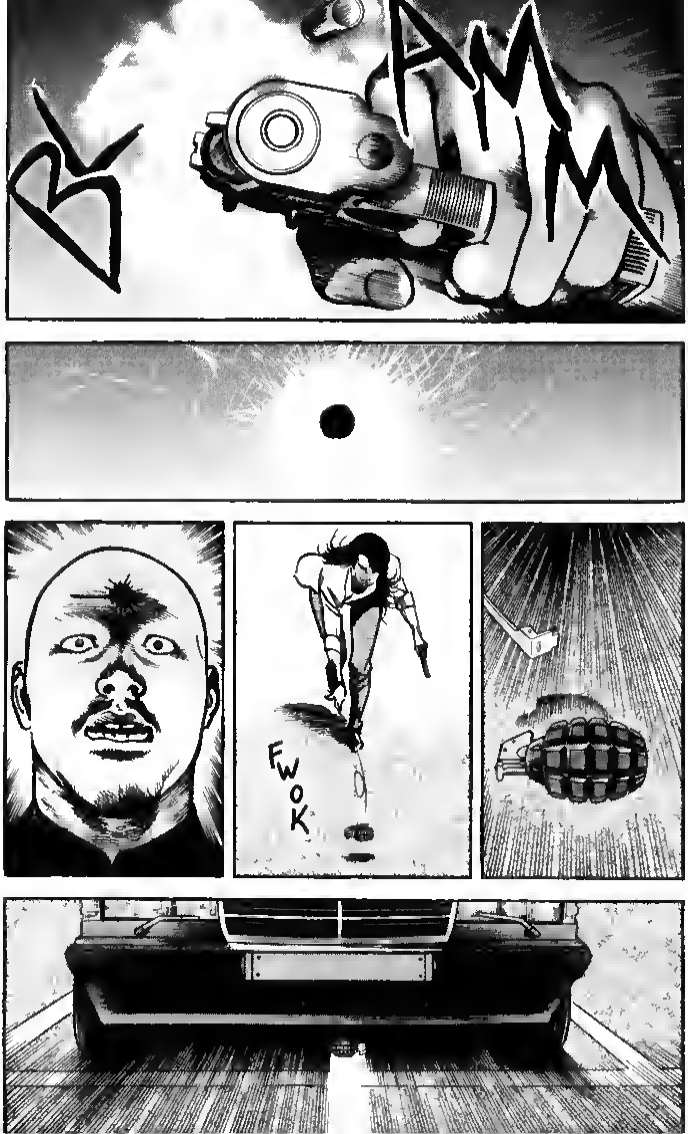
HEARD HE'S A PRETTY BOY, TOO

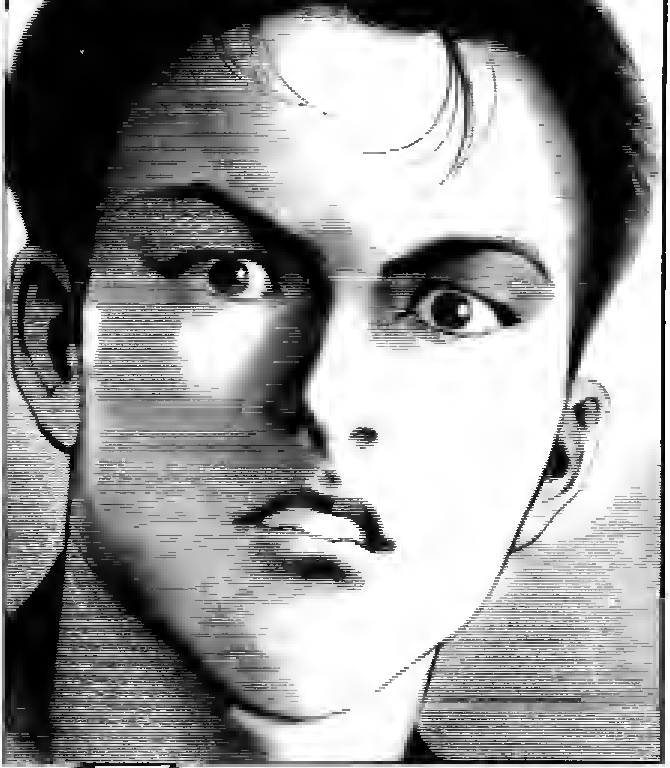


CH
N
K
BLAM
SCREECH
CH
N
K
I DON'T LIKE THIS FACE.

Shell
RRRRRRR
WE NEED TO GET SOME GAS
I WONDER IF HE'S REALLY BACK IN KUALA LUMPUR
YOU HEARD WHAT THEY TOLD US AT THE HARBOR. TWO OF THEM TOOK A BOAT BUT ONE STAYED
IF HE WANTED TO ESCAPE HE WOULD HAVE JOINED THE OTHER TWO
HE'S AFTER US...

RRR
KREECH
FWP
FWP
CHUD
A DAGE...

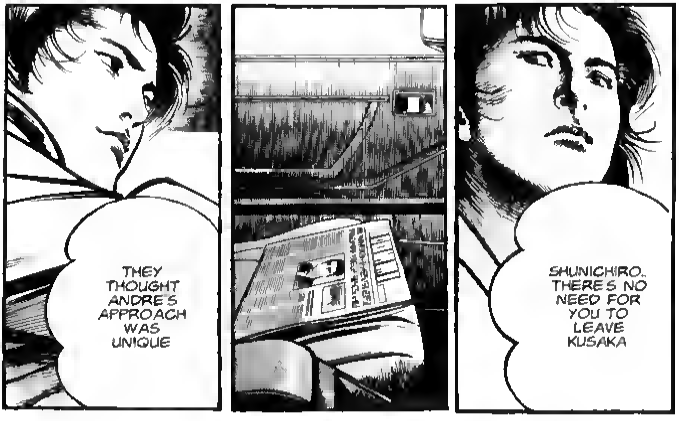

FWOK



FWOOSH

KAWHOOM

SHMP

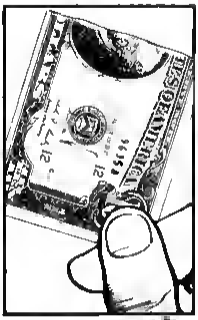

THEY THOUGHT ANDRE'S APPROACH WAS UNIQUE
SHUNICHIRO. THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO LEAVE KUSAKA

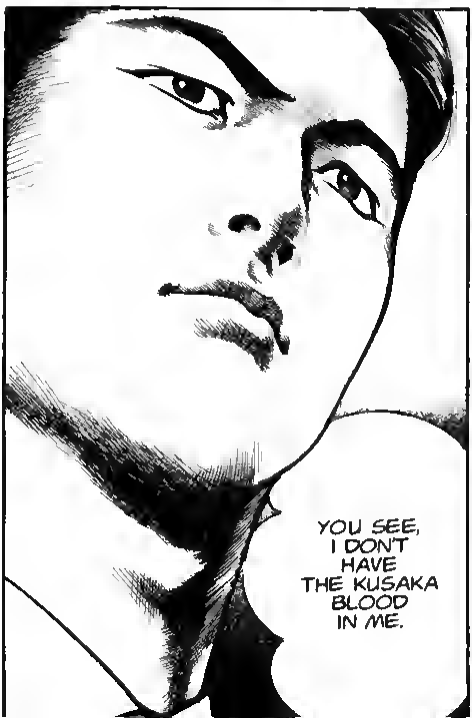
I'LL GET THOSE SHARES SHIMEI TOOK FROM YOU!

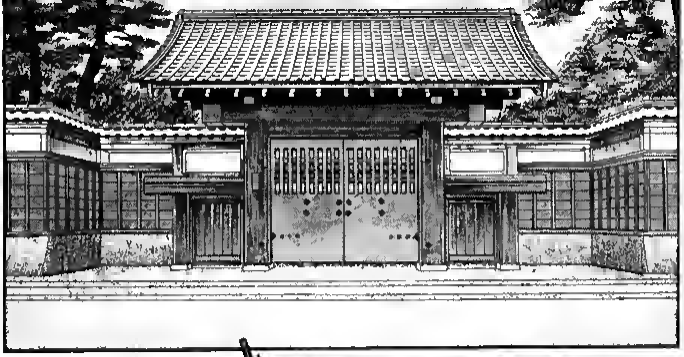
Kusaka, Malaysia Head Office
DON'T YOU THINK YOU WOULD'VE SAVED A LOT OF TROUBLE...
...IF YOU'D JUST HANDED OVER THE COMPANY TO SHINGO IN THE FIRST PLACE?

WELL... THERE WERE COMPLI CATIONS.

EH




YOU SEE, I DON'T HAVE THE KUSAKA BLOOD IN ME.



ZHOOP

SHION

PLEASE, SIR!
WHUD
LEND ME YOUR MEN! I'M GOING BACK TO MALAYSIA!
SHION!

PLEASE! I NEED YOUR MEN!!
To Be Continued